

# Srila Prabhupada: The Founder-Acarya of ISKCON

Srila Prabhupada, born Abhay Charan De, was a renowned spiritual leader, teacher, and author who founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), also known as the Hare Krishna movement. As the founder-acarya of ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada was instrumental in spreading the teachings of Gaudiya Vaishnavism and the Bhagavad-gita to the Western world.

## Early Life and Education

Abhay Charan De was born on September 1, 1896, in Calcutta, India. His parents were devout Vaishnavas, who instilled in him a deep love for Krishna and the Bhagavad-gita. From a young age, he exhibited a serious and inquisitive nature, particularly in matters of spirituality.



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by ISKCON Revival Movement

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After completing his formal education, Abhay Charan De joined the British-Indian Army and served as a pharmacist during World War I. However, he later resigned from the military and pursued a career in the pharmaceutical industry. He eventually became a successful businessman, earning significant wealth and respect.

## **Meeting His Spiritual Master**

In 1922, Abhay Charan De met his spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura, the founder of the Gaudiya Math. Deeply impressed by Bhaktisiddhanta's teachings and mission, he accepted him as his guru and pledged to dedicate his life to spreading the message of Krishna consciousness.

Under the guidance of Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, Abhay Charan De underwent rigorous spiritual training and study of the Vaishnava scriptures. He became known as a gifted preacher and writer, composing several books and articles on the philosophy and practice of Gaudiya Vaishnavism.

## **Establishment of ISKCON**

After the passing of his spiritual master in 1937, Abhay Charan De continued to spread the teachings of Krishna consciousness. In 1959, at the age of 69, he traveled to the United States and established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in New York City.

ISKCON's mission was to spread the teachings of Lord Krishna and the Bhagavad-gita to the Western world. Inspired by Srila Prabhupada's leadership, ISKCON quickly established temples, centers, and communities throughout the United States and beyond.

## **Teachings and Contributions**

Srila Prabhupada's teachings were based on the ancient Vedic scriptures, particularly the Bhagavad-gita and the Srimad Bhagavatam. He emphasized the importance of devotional service (bhakti) to Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Srila Prabhupada translated and commented on numerous Vedic texts, making them accessible to a wide audience. His books, such as "Bhagavad-gita As It Is" and "Srimad Bhagavatam," have been translated into over 80 languages and have sold millions of copies worldwide.

Srila Prabhupada also established several institutions within ISKCON, including the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust for publishing his books, the Bhaktivedanta Institute for Higher Education for studying Vaishnava philosophy, and the Food for Life program for providing meals to the needy.

## **Legacy and Impact**

Srila Prabhupada passed away on November 14, 1977, in Vrindavan, India. He left behind a legacy of spiritual teachings, a global organization with over 500 temples and centers, and millions of followers around the world.

Srila Prabhupada's contributions to the spread of Krishna consciousness and the revival of Vedic culture have been widely recognized. He is considered one of the most influential spiritual leaders of the 20th century and his teachings continue to inspire and guide countless people to this day.

Srila Prabhupada, the founder-acarya of ISKCON, was a visionary spiritual leader who dedicated his life to sharing the teachings of Krishna

consciousness with the world. Through his exceptional scholarship, tireless preaching, and unwavering devotion, he brought the ancient wisdom of the Vedas to the West and transformed the lives of millions.

Srila Prabhupada's legacy continues to inspire and guide seekers of truth, offering hope and purpose in a world often filled with uncertainty. His teachings remain a beacon of spiritual light, illuminating the path to self-realization and ultimate happiness.



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